(a) whether there is any case of under cutting of price of cast iron spun pipes by IISCO; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps proposed to be taken to check this practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The prices of cast lorn spun pipes of IISCO are not controlled. IISCO fixes its prices keeping its liegitimate commercial interests in view. Government are not aware of any specific case of under cutting of prices of cast Iron spun pipes by IISCO.

(b) does not arise.

Inter-State Multi-Purpose Projects

5165 SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details and the reasons for increasing in the cost of inter-State Multipurpose projects against the onginal estimated cost;

(b) the steps taken by the Union government to reduce the gap between the original estimates and the escalated cost; and

(c) the details of steps taken by the Government to expedite the implementation of these projects as originally planned?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) the details and reasons for increase in costs of river valley projects are inadequate allocation of funds by the beneficiary States, inadequate investigations at the time of formulation of the projects leading to major changes in designs during construction, inadequate provisions in the original estimate for land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement, environmental safeguards, canal works and shortage of essential construction materials such as cement, steel and explosives.

(b) and (c). the strategy adopted in the Eighth Plan is to priorities the on-going projects for allocation of funds. Also, the Planning Commission has decided to rigorously follow earmarking of funds for the projects.

Utilisation of Solar Energy

5166. SHRIGANGADHRA SANIPALLI: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONA ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of comsolar energy being utilised by the country;

(b) whether existing technology is enough to utilise the Solar Energy to the fullest possible extent;

(c) if not, the other steps the Government propose to take to encourage the development of Solar Energy system;

(d) the extent of its utilisation in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) if so, details thereof district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENEGRY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) Solar Energy is being utilized thorough two different routes in the country, viz (i) photovo-ltaic route and (ii) solar thermal route. In the first case solar energy is directly converted into electricity using solar photovotaic cells. In the second case Solar Energy is converted into heat energy which is further used for variety of applications such as cooking, heating of